General Assembly

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Human Rights Council
Thirty-sixth session
11–29 September 2017
Agenda item 5

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council on 29 September 2017

36/22. Promotion and protection of the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas

The Human Rights Council,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

Determined to foster strict respect for the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

Recalling also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and all other relevant human rights instruments,

Recalling further Human Rights Council resolutions 13/4 of 24 March 2010, 16/27 of 25 March 2011 and 19/7 of 22 March 2012 on the right to food, and in particular Council resolutions 21/19 of 27 September 2012, 26/26 of 27 June 2014 and 30/13 of 1 October 2015 on the promotion and protection of the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas,

Underlining the imperative need to achieve the unfinished agenda of the Millennium Development Goals in order to contribute to making the right to development a reality for everyone, and welcoming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 66/222 of 22 December 2011, in which the Assembly declared 2014 the International Year of Family Farming, and welcoming also its resolution 68/232 of 20 December 2013, in which the Assembly declared 2015 the International Year of Soils, and its resolution 68/231 of 20 December 2013, in which it declared 2016 the International Year of Pulses,

Taking note of general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in March 2016,

Recognizing the important contribution of peasants and other people working in rural areas to the fight against hunger and the preservation and improvement of biodiversity, among others, and the need to respect, promote, protect and fulfil their human rights,

Gravely concerned that hunger, like poverty, is still predominantly a rural problem, and that in the rural population it is those who produce food who suffer disproportionately, and alarmed that 75 per cent of people suffering from hunger live in rural areas, particularly in developing countries, and 50 per cent are small-scale and traditional farm holders, as well as subsistence farmers, and that they are especially vulnerable to food insecurity, malnutrition, discrimination and exploitation,

Recognizing that livelihoods in rural areas are disproportionately affected by poverty, climate change, lack of development and lack of access to scientific progress,

Recognizing also that peasants and other people working in rural areas are often disproportionally affected by the adverse impact of business activities,

Convinced of the need to strengthen the protection and realization of the human rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas,

Welcoming the reports of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on a United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas on its third and fourth sessions,[1] held from 17 to 20 May 2016, and from 15 to 19 May 2017, respectively, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 21/19, 26/26 and 30/13, and welcoming the constructive negotiations, broad participation and active engagement of Governments, regional and political groups, civil society, experts, international organizations and intergovernmental organizations and relevant stakeholders, particularly representatives of peasants and other people working in rural areas,

Bearing in mind the development of this issue,

1. *Decides* that the open-ended intergovernmental working group on a United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas shall hold its fifth annual session for five working days before the thirty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council, in accordance with its mandate, to negotiate, finalize and submit to the Council a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas;

2. *Also decides* that the updated version of the draft declaration that will be presented by the Chair-Rapporteur of the working group at its fifth session, taking into consideration the report of the Chair-Rapporteur on the fourth session, and the version of the draft declaration resulting from the fifth session will be translated into all official languages of the United Nations;

3. *Requests* the Chair-Rapporteur of the working group to conduct informal consultations during the intersessional periods, as appropriate, with Governments, relevant special procedures of the Human Rights Council, regional groups, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations mechanisms, civil society and representatives of peasants and other people working in rural areas, as well as with other relevant stakeholders and other relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations system;

4. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to ensure the participation in the fifth session of the working group of up to five expert panellists, including representatives of peasants and other people working in rural

[1] A/HRC/33/59 and A/HRC/36/51.

areas, civil society and grass-roots organizations from developing countries, in order to contribute to the analysis and interactive dialogues;

5. *Requests* the Secretariat to provide the working group with the human, technical and financial assistance necessary for it to fulfil its mandate, including by providing interpretation for one informal intersessional consultation, and a webcast for the fifth session of the working group;

6. *Invites* States, civil society and all relevant stakeholders, in particular representatives of peasants and other people working in rural areas, to contribute actively and constructively to the work of the working group;

7. *Requests* the working group to submit an annual report on progress made to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly for their consideration.

41st meeting
29 September 2017

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 34 to 2, with 11 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Against:

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Slovenia]